

## THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION OF EPIPHYTES

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In keeping with its goals of research and conservation of epiphytic plants, The Marie Selby Botanical Gardens held a symposium entitled "The Biology and Conservation of Epiphytes" on 5-9 May 1991 in Sarasota, Florida. This second international Symposium was modelled and expanded upon the first epiphyte Symposium, held at Selby Gardens in September 1985.

Activities during the Symposium fulfilled five Symposium major goals: 1) to provide a forum to exchange information on epiphytes and their habitats among botanists, horticulturists, and conservationists; 2) to draw public attention to epiphytes; 3) to generate specific guidelines for epiphyte conservation; 4) to compile recommendations for future epiphyte research; and 5) to promote the activities and programs of Selby Gardens.

In response to a Call for Papers issued in 1990, 205 botanists, horticulturists, and conservationists convened at the Selby Gardens. Two days of the meeting were devoted to the presentation of scientific papers on epiphyte biology and horticulture. One day was dedicated to the consideration of epiphyte conservation. Many of the participants took a one-day field trip to the National Audubon Society's Corkscrew Swamp, where native epiphytic bromeliads and orchids were viewed.

Invited and contributed papers encompassed a tremendous diversity of approaches, subjects, and plant taxa. Although most papers dealt with tropical vascular plants, temperate epiphytes and non-vascular epiphytes were also well-represented. The plenary session of invited papers included a balanced group of papers concerning epiphyte taxonomy, cladistics, ecology, and physiology. Five sessions of contributed papers focused on the following areas: epiphyte physiology and horticulture; non-vascular epiphyte biology; reproductive biology of orchids; evolutionary ecology of epiphytes, and bromeliad biology and taxonomy. These were covered in 40 oral papers. Twenty-four other papers were delivered in an all-day poster session, which allowed informal discussions among the participants. The summary statement noted that a great diversity of approaches are currently being used

to answer questions about epiphyte biology, including quantitative, modelling, and experimental approaches that until recently have largely been lacking in this field.

The international aspect of the meeting was enhanced by the presence of Latin Americans, Europeans, Asians and others that included 24 countries. Special efforts were made to include participants from tropical countries, many of whom were supported by funds given for that purpose by the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Future scientific collaboration was greatly promoted by the personal contacts established at this meeting. An informal "network" of those concerned about epiphytes was created. A list of all participants and their addresses was published in the Symposium Program (available upon request to the Department of Research, Selby Gardens), so that future mailings and newsletters can be easily communicated.

The two public lectures were successful in exciting and educating the general public on concerns of epiphyte and habitat conservation. Over 300 people attended each lecture. Dr. W. John Kress, Associate Curator of Botany at the Smithsonian Institution, presented a talk entitled: "Tropical Rainforests: Policies and Prospects," in which he described the rates, causes, and implications of deforestation in the tropics. Dr. Mark Moffett, of the National Geographic Society and Harvard University spoke on "Climbing to a New Frontier: Accessing the Forest Canopy." He presented images of the panoply of tropical organisms dwelling in the tropical forest canopy which moved the audience to care for tropical forests. During the Symposium, an original art exhibit by botanist/artist Stig Dalstrom titled "Images of a Disappearing World" was shown at Selby's Museum for Botany and the Arts.

The conservation session was organized into two parts. The morning session comprised a presentation of nine "case studies" on the conservation of epiphyte species and their habitats. The afternoon session was an organized round-table discussion on issues relating to epiphyte conservation. The use of a "nominal small-group process," in which all participants were included in

creative brainstorming in small groups, enabled ideas to be translated to priorities and specific recommendations. The group generated six questions and multiple responses on epiphyte and habitat conservation. A list of the questions and the "answers" are included in the synopsis of the conservation discussions in this Volume.

Various political issues concerning epiphytes and their habitats were presented and discussed. A petition against pesticide spraying in Guatemala, which could potentially harm pollinators of epiphytic orchids, was distributed and signed by many of the participants.

As with the previous Symposium, one of the results of the meeting was the coordination of an ongoing effort to compile a reference list of all literature citations (excluding purely taxonomic treatments), which updates the list published in the 1987 volume of *Selbyana*. This list is available as a reprint from this Volume and in electronic form from Selby Gardens.

The papers published in this volume of *Selbyana* constitute the core of the botanical subjects addressed at the Symposium. The abstracts

of all of the papers (oral and poster) are published in both English and Spanish (or other language, where appropriate).

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